The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1715 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C. WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 8

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Somewhat surprising but most refreshing are the words of encouragement we are receiving in volume from representatives of the CIO who agree fully with our recent observations anent the Communist leaders of certain CIO unions who betrayed their own organization and the cause of labor generally by advocating labor conscription.

Of course, the Daily Worker was peeved and so were a few of the Communist collaborators whose party affiliations, although officially anonymous, can easily be detected in their writings.

But the signs of revolt within the CIO against the Communist line are increasing. Besides our personal discoveries of the past few weeks, there is abundant evidence of this fact in the eruptions within the American Labor Party in New York City.

This political organization is in the throes of a desperate internal struggle for control with the forces of democratic trade unionism on one side and the Communists on the other. The group of AFL organizations which make up the right-wing of the party are being joined by increasing numbers of CIO leaders who are enraged by the fact that Sidney Hillman has sought to bring about a "united front" with the Communists.

Evidences of Revolt

We received in the mail a news release under the imprimatur of the "CIO Committee to Safeguard the American Labor Party" which begins as follows:

"More CIO officials joined the mounting protest in CIO circles here against Sidney Hillman's collaboration with Communists in their attempt to capture control of the American Labor Party in the March 28 primaries.

"Repudiation of Mr. Hillman's political activity in New York was expressed in a statement issued today by a group of thirty CIO leaders headed by Anthony H. Esposito, President, Playthings and Novelty Workers Union; George W. Wright, executive board member of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers Union; Gabriel DeAngelis, financial secretary, Aircraft Local 365, United Automobile Workers; Sam Marino, President, Local 1, Barbers and Beauty Culturists Union, and Murray Kudish, President, Local 338, Retail, Wholesale and Chain Store Food Employes."

A few days before we had received another release announcing the resignation of Samuel Baron as general manager of the Greater New York Joint Board of the Textile Workers Union (CIO) in protest against the demand of the union's national office that every officer "string along with Mr. Hillman regardless of his own views and preferences."

In his letter of resignation to Emil Rieve, President of the union, Mr. Baron said "I cannot abandon my convictions as to what I am to do politically at anyone's behest." He condemned the Hillman-Communist coalition as "contrary to the best interests of organized labor."

The Red Road To Oblivion

Further confirmation comes in a communication from Samuel Wolchok, national President of the United Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Employes of America, CIO, and Vice Chairman of the American Labor Party, who announced he was opposed to Mr. Hillman's plans because they would unite the political organization but "inevitably lead to its utter disruption."

These are but a handful of the CIO leaders who are so fed up with the Communists that they feel it necessary to denounce as high a leader of their organization as Sidney Hillman for his collaboration with the Reds.

In fact, Mr. Hillman's activities have become so suspicious that the Dies Committee was moved to investigate. But when this Congressional Committee sought to examine the books and finances of Mr. Hillman's political committee, Mr. Hillman objected.

He declared he would not produce the books and records of his group nor would he testify before the Dies Committee because that committee is empowered to investigate "Un-American" activities. Mr. Hillman denied his organization had any un-American or subversive taint.

Come, come, Mr. Hillman. You, of all people, should know better. You have had long and bitter experiences with the Communists in the past, experiences which should have taught you that the Commies are Un-American and subversive to the core. You can't play 'possum now and get away with it. It's too obvious. There cannot be any united front with the Communists by either the CIO or the AFL and the longer you flirt with the idea the sooner and the deeper will you sink into complete oblivion.

President Vetoes Unfair Tax Bill

Washington, D. C. — President Roosevelt vetoed the new tax bill with a sharp message branding it as "relief not for the needy but for the greedy." He called it "wholly ineffective" as a revenue measure.

Congressional experts said it was the first Presidential veto of a tax bill in at least half a century.

"The bill is replete with provisions which not only afford indefensible special privileges to favored groups," the President said, "but set dangerous precedents for the future."

In addition to his complaint on the ground of lack of revenue, the President stated the following objections:

The bill stops the automatic increase of 1 per cent in Social Security taxes "at a time when industry and labor are best able to adjust themselves to such increases."

It stops renegotiation of war contracts as of next Dec. 31, which "seems unwise at this time because no person can at present determine what a renegotiation time limit should be." A provision in this part of the bill for right of appeal to the Tax Court was called "inept."

A point of which the President made a special issue was the complexity of the present tax laws, a condition which he said was squarely the fault of Congress. The taxpayers, busy in the war effort, "are in no mood to study higher mathematics," he declared.

The failure of Congress to make good its promise to drastically simplify the tax system, he said, was indicated by its ignoring of "the most obvious step toward simplifying taxes by failing to eliminate the clumsy Victory tax."

Communists Take Severe Licking In Elections of Three ILGWU Locals

New York City.—Communist tickets were severely repudiated and the administration of David Dubinsky overwhelmingly endorsed in elections just conducted by three local unions of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

In Local 89, Luigi Antonini triumphed over an opposition Communist slate by a vote of 17,805 to 467.

"The results of the election in Local 89 are a resounding defeat for the Communist party and its stooges in our organization," said Mr. Antonini. "It is also a defeat for fascist elements, who joined in the cry of the Communist opposition against those in our union who are determined to keep it clean of any totalitarian influence and control.

"They were particularly interested in defeating the administration because they hoped that their victory would serve to bolster their activities for a so-called united front in Italy. All thinking Italian laborites and democrats are opposed to any united front with the Communists."

In the elections at Locals 22 and 62, the Communists failed to elect a candidate to either of the executive boards or as delegate to the ILGWU convention to be held in Boston next May. Charles Zimmerman and Samuel Shore, Dubinsky supporters, were reelected by huge margins.

INJURED OHIO WORKER WAS PAID $91,390.42

Columbus, Ohio.—Secretary-Treasurer Phil Hannah of the Ohio State Federation of Labor, revealed that Fred Schaefer of Columbus, a sign painter, from the time of his injury in 1926 when he fell 70 feet from a broken scaffold to the ground, fracturing his spine, until his death in December, 1943, was paid $91,390.42 in awards under the Ohio workmen's compensation law. The law was initiated more than thirty years ago by William Green, then a member of the Ohio Senate, now president of the American Federation of Labor.

During the 18 years from his injury to his death, Mr. Schaefer was paid $20,194.81 compensation plus hospital, medical and doctor bills amounting to $71,195.61, making the total cost of the claim $91,390.42. In 1940 the compensation commission advanced him a lump sum on his future payments of compensation in the amount of $4,000 with which he purchased a home where he could be with his wife and son. The commission furnished special medical equipment and provided a nurse for daytime duty.

RAYMOND MASSEY STAR OF NEXT AFL BROADCAST

New York City.—Raymond Massey, famous actor, will star in the next AFL "Labor For Victory" program which will be broadcast at 1:15 P.M., E.W.T., on March 5, over a nation-wide NBC network.

The program, a dramatization entitled "Maytown Knows the Difference," will tell the story of how the Red Cross helps labor as well as those in the armed services. It will be presented to inaugurate the AFL's participation in the Red Cross drive which seeks donations of 200 million dollars in March.

Post-War "Consultation" Not Enough, Labor And Industry Tell Government

Washington, D. C.—Donald M. Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board, revealed that he had given leaders of organized labor a flat pledge to consult with them on the same terms as industry "in working out the readjustments that are to come."

Nelson made the pledge at a meeting with AFL President William Green, CIO President Philip Murray, and 14 other AFL and CIO officials.

The WPB chief previously held a similar meeting with 14 leading industrialists and promised them that he would make no reconversion decisions without prior consultation with them, through established industry advisory committees.

Arrangements to provide for "identical consultation" with labor representatives are being made, Nelson said.

At the same time, leaders of labor, industry and agriculture served notice that they will not be satisfied with mere indirect "consultation" on post-war problems and that they will oppose the recommendations of the Baruch report entrusting responsibility for post-war decisions in one man.

This reaction came from the National Post-war Conference held in Atlantic City, where representatives of the AFL, CIO, National Association of Manufacturers, United States Chamber of Commerce, farm groups and other national organizations adopted a unanimous policy.

Robert J. Watt, international representative of the AFL and serving as chairman of the Press Committee of the Conference, declared that appointment of "one man, without any checks and balances," would be "inimical to the best interests of the country."

Speaking for the conference, Watt demanded the creation of a Reconstruction Commission, on which labor, industry and agriculture would be represented, to determine the over-all policies of the post-war program. This recommendation was in line with the report of the AFL Post-war Committee, which was unanimously approved by the AFL Executive Council several weeks ago.

Post-war objectives listed by the Conference, which took in a representative cross-section of the nation's life, included:

"An economy of plenty instead of scarcity.

"An opportunity for people to have jobs and increasingly better living standards and educational advantages."

The statement added:

"These goals mean that mass unemployment, ruinous farm prices, violent ups and downs in business, monopolistic practices in any field, socialization of business and Government-planned economy for the Nation must be avoided."

Bedaux, Speedup Wizard, Suicide While Facing Charges of Treason

Miami, Fla.—Charles E. Bedaux, originator of the infamous industrial speed-up system which brought him a fortune out of the sweat of workers, died here from an overdose of sleeping tablets after he had been informed that the F.B.I. was preparing to prosecute him for treason and for trafficking with the Nazi and Vichy governments.

Bedaux, who was arrested in North Africa after the Allied invasion and kept in a detention home since his arrival here Dec. 23, left a note which made it clear that he intended to commit suicide.

His death lifted the veil from some of his nefarious activities in recent years. Attorney General Biddle in Washington disclosed that Bedaux had admitted in signed statements close acquaintance with Nazi and Vichy chiefs.

Among those with whom Bedaux swore he exchanged confidences were Joachim Von Ribbentrop, German Foreign Minister; Otto Abetz, former German Ambassador to Occupied France; Capt. Fritz Weidemann, Hitler's former personal adjutant and former German Consul General at San Francisco, and Pierre Laval.

After the fall of France, Bedaux traveled freely between the occupied and unoccupied sections of France, serving as a liaison man between the Nazis and the Vichy government, Mr. Biddle said. In 1942, after this country had entered the war, Bedaux was assigned by Laval to construct a pipe line across the Sahara. He obtained permission from the Germans to get steel, gasoline and pumping equipment for this project.

The invasion of North Africa disrupted Bedaux's plans in behalf of the Nazis and the Vichyites and resulted in his capture.

Born in France, Bedaux came to this country as a boy and was naturalized as a citizen in 1917. He became wealthy almost overnight by advising business corporations how they could obtain more work for less money from their employes through speedup methods.

His speedup system was under constant attack by organized labor. The last time Bedaux was in the United States was in 1937 when he described himself as a representative of the Duke of Windsor, who planned to come here to study labor and housing conditions. The Duke's association with Bedaux, in whose home he was married, created such an uproar that the former British King cancelled his projected visit.

WMC Liberalizes Appeals Rules

Washington, D. C.—On recommendation of its national Management-Labor-Policy committee, the War Manpower Commission has revised its appeals procedure covering the issuance of statements of availability which permit war workers to change jobs.

The amended regulation gives any interested party the right to appear and to be heard at the area hearing and limits the vote at the hearing to equal numbers of management and labor representatives.

Each worker and employer must be advised of his appeal rights when informed of the decision in his case. Appeals will be limited to evidence presented at the area hearing, but unrestricted right of appeal is open to all interested parties.

The new rules further provide that any statement of availability issued to a worker will be final, that the handling of appeals should be speeded up and that only panels representing the aera, regional and national management-labor committee can take up appeals.

The changes were largely the results of the efforts of Frank Fenton, representing the American Federation of Labor to change the appeals machinery so as to eliminate certain injustices and to include certain procedures that had been adopted unofficially because appeals panels found them practical in meeting the problems brought before them. The revisions represented a compromise between the positions of labor and management representatives on the national committee. In its final form, the amended regulation was unanimously approved.

ELDERLY WORKERS SEEK WAR INDUSTRIES JOBS

Washington, D. C.—Indications that Americans are eager to work in war industries despite advanced age and physical handicaps are contained in the eighth annual report of the Social Security Board for the fiscal year 1943, sent to Congress by Federal Security Administrator Paul V. McNutt.

The board report, submitted by Chairman Arthur J. Altmeyer to Mr. McNutt, discloses that only about one-third, or 284,000, of the older men and women who could have received monthly benefits under the old-age and survivors' insurance program had they retired from work have elected to draw such benefits. More than 600,000 persons past 65 chose to postpone their benefit claims, the bulk of them to continue at work in behalf of the war effort. In addition, about one-seventh or 119,410, of the retired workers and survivors of insured workers who were on the benefit rolls in June, 1943, were foregoing their benefits because they were working in covered jobs.

FATHER AND SON, BOTH SEABEES, BACK IN U. S.

Two Nashville, Tenn., Seabees, father and son, have returned from the South Pacific war zone after suffering injuries while working at an advanced base. Members of the same battalion, they are Earl F. Turner, Carpenter's Mate First Class, and his son, John Thomas Turner, Seaman First Class.

The elder Turner, before enlisting in the Seabees, was a member of Nashville Fire Fighters' Local 763 (AFL). He was wounded by a Jap bomb on Rendova. He said his outfit was hard hit during the landing operation but that the work of constructing hospitals, roads, airfields, and landing strips went on. The younger Turner also went in with the first wave of invading forces and received a medical discharge in November after seeing action at Rendova, Munda, and another small island in the New Georgia group. He underwent 76 Jap air raids in a 27-day period on Rendova.

"Up Wages, Reduce Prices," Meany Counsels Roosevelt

A Report To The President

Washington, D. C.—Text of the joint letter sent to President Roosevelt by AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany and R. J. Thomas of the CIO, the labor members of the President's Committee on the Cost of Living, follows:

"On November 5, 1943 you designated a Cost of Living Committee and charged it with the responsibility of ascertaining the facts regarding the actual rise of living costs during the war period. The Committee so designated was of a tripartite nature, consisting of William H. Davis, Chairman of the National War Labor Board, two industrial representatives and two labor representatives of the War Labor Board.

"On January 25, the Labor members presented to the full Committee a comprehensive report on the actual increase in the cost of living since January, 1941. As of the present date, no material has been presented or, as far as we know, even prepared by the remaining members of the Committee. In view of the failure of the other members to have made any investigation since November 5th or to have assembled any comprehensive data pursuant to your instructions when you designated the Committee and because of our firm conviction that nothing further can be expected of this Committee for some months to come, we can not continue to sit by and abide by this extraordinary delay in the face of the facts which we have found. Because of the intense public interest that obtains regarding this vital issue and the important policies that are predicated thereon, we feel compelled to transmit to you our report. We do not feel that we would be meeting our obligations, as members of the Committee or as representatives of employe organizations, if we were not to transmit this report to you at this time.

"The report which the Labor members have transmitted to your Committee reveals a startling situation. In lieu of the misleading figures of the Bureau of Labor Statistics alleging a rise in the cost of living of approximately twenty-four (24%) percent since January, 1941 our data to the contrary demonstrates conclusively that there has been a rise in the actual cost of living of at least forty-three and one-half (43.5%) percent during the same period.

"Our report reveals that the Bureau of Labor Statistics, with full understanding, has permitted its index to be used as a basis for measuring the rise in the cost of living. The Bureau of Labor Statistics is aware of the fact that such use of its index reflects the gravest type of injustice that could possibly be perpetrated by it upon the American people. The very failure of the Bureau of Labor Statistics to make clear that its index does not adequately reflect the realistic and actual rise in the cost of living subjects the Bureau to very serious charges. For instance, the index of the Bureau does not purport to reflect cost of living rises due to increases in the price of foods not priced by the Bureau, elimination of low-priced goods, upgrading, deterioration of quality standards or the rising cost of restaurant meals.

"In all fairness to the American people, we urgently request that there be in intensive investigation of the part that has been played by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the publication of an index which distorts the basic facts of our war-time living costs."

Radio Plea Foll[illegible] Attack On BLS Cost [illegible] Living Figures

Washington, D. C.—AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany called upon President Roosevelt to permit revision of the "Little Steel" formula to allow for increases in the cost of living and urged the President to insist that Congress authorize subsidies to hold the line on prices of basic food commodities.

In a nationally broadcast "Labor For Victory" interview, Mr. Meany said:

"Labor is confident that the American people will support this fair and just program which is vitally necessary to restore morale and to assure topmost efficiency in war production."

At the same time, Mr. Meany joined with R. J. Thomas of the CIO in a letter to the President charging that the public and industry members of the President's Committee on the Cost of Living are stalling and have not attempted to make a real investigation of mounting prices.

With their letter, Meany and Thomas, the two labor members of the committee, submitted a copy of their report showing that the cost of living had increased at least 43.5 per cent since Pearl Harbor.

They charged that the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which reports only a 24 per cent rise, "distorts the basic facts of our war-time living costs." Failure of the BLS to make clear that its index does not adequately reflect the realistic and actual rise in the cost of living "subjects the Bureau to very serious charges," the letter said.

In his radio talk, Mr. Meany declared that the remorseless squeeze of increased living costs while wages are frozen under the "Little Steel" formula has been "cruel and disastrous" to the morale of workers.

He insisted that everyone else is not making equal sacrifices, adding:

"Profits, even after taxes, are now higher than ever before. Many corporations made net profits in the year 1942 alone which were three to six times greater than their entire original investment. Most farmers, storekeepers and industries are enjoying unprecedented prosperity. Application of the nation's economic stabilization program has not halted profiteering. But it has caught the nation's workers in an ever tightening vise."

Discussing the stabilization program, Mr. Meany pointed out that as originally advanced by the President it consisted of seven points, which the President described as "indivisible." Nevertheless, Congress kicked out of the window such provisions as keeping corporate and personal profits at a "low level" through heavy taxes and a limit on net incomes. It has refused to authorize subsidies to enforce fixed ceilings on prices and even rents have gone up 15 per cent, he said.

Most people overlook the fact that labor has exercised remarkable patience, Mr. Meany remarked. Each time labor appealed for relief, he said, it was given new promises, each one just as empty of fulfillment as its predecessor. He concluded:

"Is there anyone in America who believes the cost of living has been effectively controlled by the Government in the last two years? Is there anyone so simple-minded as to believe that price control as it now limps along can be relied upon by the American people to protect them?

"There are two things that must be done. First, the President and the War Labor Board should revise the Little Steel formula to allow for the increase in living costs since May 1942. Second, the President should insist that Congress authorize subsidies to hold the line on prices for basic food commodities, at least."

Aircraft Production Time Slashed 90 Percent, WPB Official Discloses

Washington, D. C.—Labor's increased productivity and mass production methods have reduced construction time of military aircraft by 90 percent, Charles E. Wilson, executive vice chairman of the War Production Board, revealed.

"An early fighter plane type took 157,000 man-hours for construction," he said. "Mass production cut that time to 7,800 man-hours for the 1,000th plane. A four-motored bomber took 200,000 man hours for construction in its early production stage. The 1,000th plane of this model took 22,500 man-hours. Now, mass production has cut that time to 13,000 man-hours for the 2,000th plane."

Wilson said aerial operations against aircraft manufacturing facilities in Germany had curtailed her ability to produce combat planes, while that of the American aircraft industry to produce more efficient combat aircraft types in greater numbers is gaining momentum. January totals, not noticeably higher in number, showed an increase in airframe weight of 5.4 percent: from 85,700,000 to 90,300,000 pounds.

"The American aircraft industry has the management, the mechanical genius and the manpower to maintain and even increase its superb production record," he said.

War Food Recipe Contest Announced

Washington, D. C.—The AFL Union Label Trades Department announced it will offer $700 in War Bonds and Stamps as prizes for the best low-point recipe and menus for three daily meals.

I. M. Ornburn, Secretary-Treasurer of the department, said "the Victory Recipe-Menu Contest had received the highest praise from officials of the Federal Government who are in charge of food and nutrition." They promised the highest degree of cooperation.

"All recipes and menus should conform to the Seven Basic Food Groups advocated by the War Food Administration," said Mr. Ornburn, "and the recipe for the principal dish of the main meal—dinner—should be well balanced, using as few rationing points as possible. In fact, there are five different kinds of Recipe-Menu combinations that can be submitted but each contestant can win only one prize."

The contest rules follow:

1. Write full name and complete address in upper right-hand corner of each page. Use one side of sheet only. 2. Write title, which is "Victory Recipe-Menu Contest." 3. Give one recipe for principal dish for dinner or main meal of the day with list and proportion of all its ingredients and complete details about preparation or cooking. 4. Give a list of other food items for the dinner. It is not necessary to give recipes for these other items to complete the full-course dinner. 5. Menu for dinner should be followed by complete menus for breakfast and lunch. Recipes for other items in addition to the principal one for dinner are not required. 6. Confine all writing to the dinner recipe and the complete menus for the three daily meals. 7. Anyone may submit Recipe-Menus in any or all of the five groups. However, the same person can only win one of them. 8. The Recipe-Menus will be judged by a committee of seven prominent and competent experts.

All material must be submitted by midnight April 30, 1944. Winners will be announced on May 30, 1944. The Victory Recipe-Menus of the winners will be published in booklet form by the Union Label Trades Department.

LABOR MAN IS AUTHOR OF 'LABOR UNIONS AND YOU'

Fordham Rab, erstwhile editor of the Portland, Ore., Boilermakers publication, AFL, is the author of a booklet entitled "Labor Unions and You," with the subtitle "American Labor Will Fight."

Declaring that "trade unionist education" is the primary purpose of the booklet, Mr. Rab, who is public relations director of the AFL Metal Trades of Portland and Vicinity, says he received much encouragement in the preparation of the material from responsible labor leaders, notably President William Green of the AFL and President John P. Frey of the AFL Metal Trades Department, who made generous contributions to the publication. The introduction is by President Green, who says the author has "done a very fine job" and "has made a genuine contribution toward the promotion of the interests of organized labor."

"Labor Unions and You" is published by the Portland Daily Journal of Commerce. The first edition consisted of 100,000 copies.

SEABEE LAUDS EQUIPMENT MADE BY UNION WORKERS

Washington, D. C.—High praise for equipment turned out by union workers was given by Seabee H. J. Hulstrom, USNR, Machinist's Mate, of Chico, California, veteran of the African invasion, wearer of the Purple Heart, and former member of the International Union of Operating Engineers (AFL). He was a bulldozer and shovel operator in civilian life.

Hulstrom was gun pointer and gun captain of one of the twin gun mounts aboard an LST in the convoy which entered Bizerte. He said the equipment taken along worked fine and "gave us very little trouble considering the beating we gave it." He said the German and Italian stuff looked rugged but everytime it was pushed very hard, it had to be overhauled.

"This is a new kind of war," the former union man said. "You can't win it with just guns and ships and planes. It takes bulldozers, trucks, cats, cranes, shovels, and all kinds of heavy stuff that doesn't look like it could fight. This war takes the kind of rugged stuff that union men and women know how to make."

PETER ELLER ELECTED TO BTEA PRESIDENCY

New York City.—Peter W. Eller, President of the Thompson-Starrett Company, Inc., and National Referee for the Building and Construction Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, has been elected President of the Building Trades Employers Association of New York.

Mr. Eller, whose labor record has been so fine that he has been entrusted with the responsibility of making final decisions on jurisdictional disputes among the the building trades unions, is also taking active part in the formulation of post-war building programs in New York.

50,000 WOMEN IN RUSSIA GET CLOTHES FROM UNION

New York City.—More than 50,000 warm garments, representing an expenditure of almost $800,000 in material and labor, will be sent to the heroic women of Russia by members of Locals 22, 10 and 60 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union through the Labor League for Human Rights, the AFL's official relief arm, according to an announcement made by Charles S. Zimmerman, manager of Local 22.